

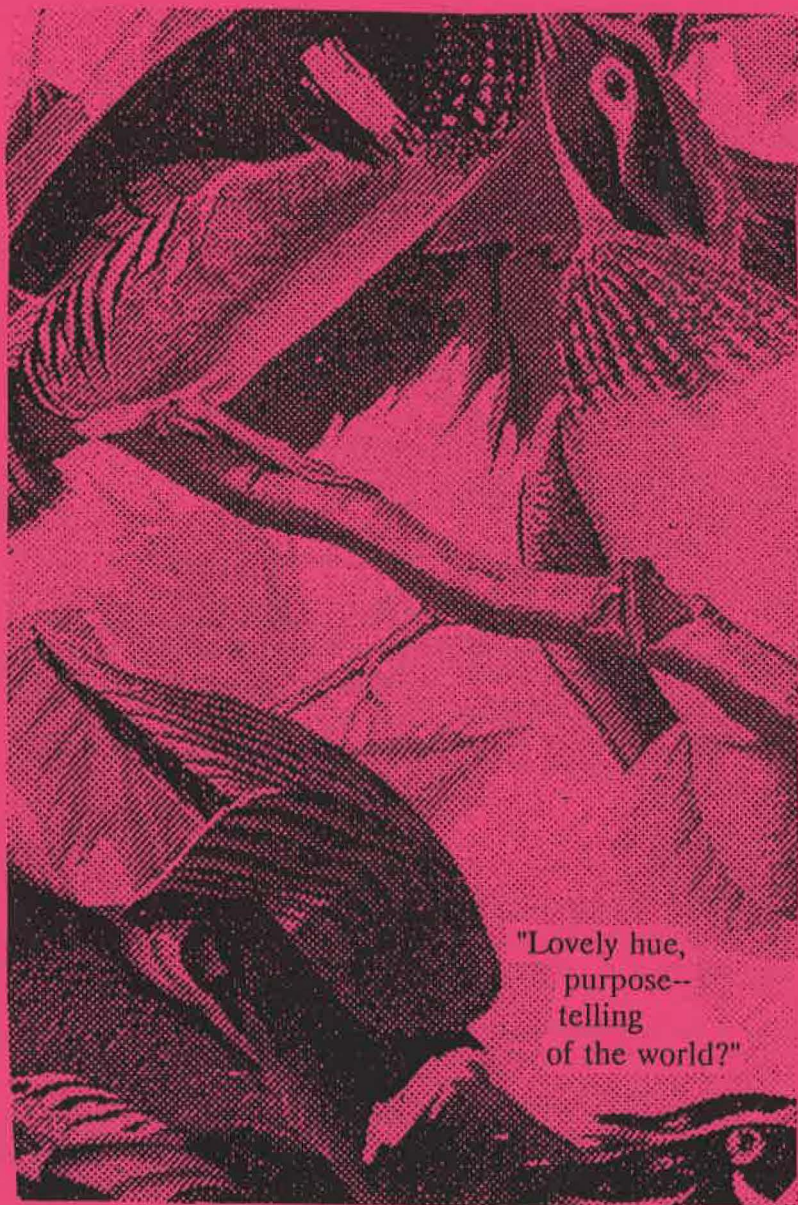
POP STOCK

NUMBER TWO
MAY 1993
IT'S FREE

BILL'S ILLS

7" wonders of
the world

The Coctails' Long Sound



"Lovely hue,
purpose--
telling
of the world?"

POP STOCK MAKES MY POP STOCK
(a dozen apprehensions)

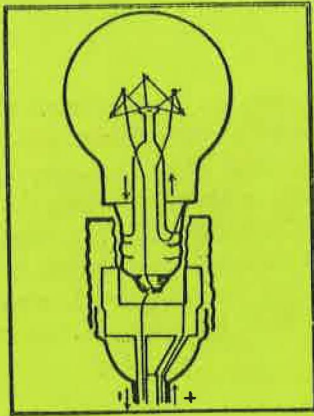
1. Summer of Love '93.
2. Summer of Hate '93.
3. Calamine lotion.
4. "Are you finding your size?"
5. The one that warbles when you whistle is the last one left to listen to.
6. Big Star, Cream.
7. Denied fiction, we resort to fact.
8. David Koresh ~~X~~ ^{was} god.
9. Parenthesis (usually).
10. And who do you think they were?
11. The 144 inhabitants of Mayotte Island, infuriated with the ruling Comorons, refuse shipments of saltine crackers and, instead, begin taking dried banana chips with their chowder.
12. Milwaukee.

POP STOCK

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Bill, Why, Man?

I suppose it is excusable that Bill Wyman feels some journalistic compulsion to use terms like "post-post-feminist" and descriptions like "he drums like he's pouring gasoline over a hostage." After all, all of us who write are given, on occasion, to the writer's disease known as inflation. The malady, in fact, is an epidemic in rock criticism where prevailing logic awards points for the number of hyphens employed in the creation of complex-multi-modified-oblique-neo-classifications-cum-adjectives (7 pts.) But Bill's jargon has spread from his modifiers to his cultural references ("Urge Overkill, I think, are the Reservoir Dogs of rock") to his very ideas.

The rapid spread of his disease seems to be the result of the equally rapid disintegration of his immunity to bullshit. No doubt, a *Newsweek* assignment covering Guns 'n' Roses would speed the deterioration of anyone's standards, but Bill has made little effort to rage, rage against the buying of his writing.

A personal message from me to Bill:

Guns 'n' Roses (Axl Rose, in particular) are homophobic, sexist, racist pigs. They are ignorant brats with little or no redeeming talent or creativity to encourage forgiveness of their unforgivable brutality toward others.

In a letter to the editor printed in the April 9 *Reader*, Wyman responded to a letter in the previous issue criticizing his use of "Farsi" as a synonym for "Persian." In closing, Bill states "we should speak and write naturally." After reading this, I went back to Bill's Hitsville column of March 19 in which he strokes Urge Overkill, saying: "They talk in an almost-sincere commercial patois: 'This is the hardest rockin' Urge album ever!' avers Roeser." If Bill naturally uses "patois" and "avers" in his speech, as well as his writing, I won't be calling to chat anytime soon. (I looked them up. "Patois" means "colloquial jargon," "avers" means "confirms.")

But more distressing than Bill's distortion of language are his distortions of judgement. We, as readers, should not be subjected to Urge's twisted logic: "Most 'hip' bands can't listen to us. I can't listen to them either. So many of the 'hip' bands are unlistenable...where we live now, in Humboldt Park, I'm sorry, but you don't hear guys in pajamas playing Marshalls." I? UO are the 'hippest' of the 'hip', as anyone who has seen them around town in their ugly-overdone-semi-70's-ski-lodge-fire-sale-cocktail-party-gone-bad-wear (12 pts.) could tell you. Wyman's willingness to give their facile bleatings a forum is disingenuous, at best, and damaging, at worst.

Why on earth does Bill characterize the Chicago scene as a "harsh constraint"? This is his neighborhood, why let his dog shit on it? And why let UO get away with arrogant self-aggrandizement such as "Why should we make people who want to see us sit through all those other bands?" (regarding their turning-down an invite to Lolapalooza III) without calling the ego-puffs on their bluff?

The answer lies in a quote from the most lame-brained and insidious of the Overkillers, Blackie O. (who, incidentally, I once saw pummel a woman into submission on the floor of Lounge Ax as a show let out): "I believe that we are the good guys, but we have to be bad to fuck up the bad guys." The truth is that huge segments of the population, a near-unanimity, in fact, feel they have to "be bad"--*not* to "fuck up the bad guys," but to advance their own paltry ambitions (always self-assessed as "good.") Urge Overkill and Bill Wyman are no exceptions.

But UO are not good guys--the article makes what we've always suspected plain. They insult the indie-rock scene that has been their bread and butter for years; they insult their compatriots in the local music scene; they insult other Lolapalooza musicians; they even insult their own fans. They are small-minded-blindered-neo-retro-hipsters (5pts.) who'd just as soon step on the heads of the people who've propped them up, as on their own white patent leather platform shoes. Someone should whisper this in their cars:

King, Nash, Blackie: try on a pair of Dockers, fellas. And, just as an exercise, go up to some other person--a member of another local band, perhaps; but someone in no position to further your career--and say: "hey, I really like what you're doing, friend. Take care."

They'd all be better off for having done so.

LONG SOUND by The Coctails
jazzy non-jazzish unjazz jazz

yesterday i received my first ever comp copy of a newly-released cd in the mail. for a fledgling magazine, this is a rite of passage. to honor the moment, i feel, on one level, obliged to review the disc. on another level, though, i feel to do so would be misleading. the cd, you see, is The Coctails' Long Sound and, seeing as i am somewhat friendly with the lads and already own a copy of Long Sound, autographed by Mark, Sarry, John, and Archer, it would be less than forthright and perhaps a disservice to readers to stroke the Coctails verbally without mention of my fondness for them as musicians and as people.

that said, i will now review Long Sound by the Coctails.

Long Sound is not a jazz record, though it is a jazz record. kind of. the forms are jazz, kind of. the instrumentation (saxes, bass clarinet, vibes, piano, stand-up bass) is jazz, kind of. the arrangements and compositions are jazz, kind of. the music is jazz, kind of. but the record, as a whole; the product; if you will, is not jazz at all. it is, to borrow an inappropriate term from postmodernism, "appropriated" jazz. (maybe it isn't inappropriate--after all, these guys did go to art school.) but i don't think the coctails agenda is postmodern. their mission has more in common with middle-aged men who pay to attend major league baseball fantasy camps--swinging at 100 mph fastballs, fielding big league balimore chops, and turning 'round the horn dp's--than it does with sherrie levine or jeff koons.

listening to the Coctails' "jazz" isn't like listening to Ellington, or Monk, or Mingus. it is a little like listening to Jimmy Smith or Chet Baker--not that it sounds like either of them. it's not a sonic similarity. it's a feeling thing. Long Sound isn't about "playing." there are no remarkable solos (Ken Vardemark and Hal Russell, notwithstanding). the fascinating thing about listening to Long Sound is listening to a group of untrained musicians trying to play like trained musicians for whom forgetting their training is the state of the art.

do they succeed? yes and no. the Coctails are a little too clever to be naive enough to be geniuses at this. but they're self-conscious enough to know that, without some fun, this could suck. they're also self-editing enough to know that, ultimately, this is not their strongest suit. (both the disc's liner notes and the promo sheet that accompanied the disc makes it clear that this is not to be taken as indication of their 'new direction'). their april 24th show at BopShop was proof. while the opening set was well-played and interesting, and the second set was energized and exuberant, it is the contrasts and combinations of these adjectives, from song to song, that makes a Coctails show a Coctails show.

on Long Sound the Coctails try, on somebody else's hat, when they first looked in the mirror, it probably looked a little funny. but somehow, they knew that if they wore it out in public, sooner or later, it would become them, and they'd

Bill Wyman, on the other hand, is a good guy--my personal dealings with him have been nothing but pleasant and he has made it clear to me that the national slant to his column is not his idea, but his editor's. Consistently, his subject matter deserves our attention. He writes about the secondary concepts that escape coverage elsewhere (record company price-gouging and concert security, for two recent examples) and the minutiae that is always more interesting and relevant than Michael Jackson's crotch-grabbing or G'n'R's misbehavior (actually he's done those stories, too.) But, unfortunately, Bill, in climbing the right tree, invariably hangs on the wrong branch.

It's sad that in Chicago the *Tribune* and the *Sun Times* do a better job of covering local music than do the *Reader* or *New City*. It ought to occur to some ambitious local writer that if they'd hitched their wagon to 11th Dream Day, or Poster Children, or the Coctails, or Shrimpboat, or Seam, or Liz Phair from the start, then, just maybe, when *Newsweek* came looking for a writer to cover "the newest and the greatest," they wouldn't have to look any farther than the band's own backyard.

Round As Buttons Hence

Let us talk about sweaters now, Chahlie.
Such mahvelous colors and the suiting of you
is what those many colors do,
Ask I of them, "Lovely hue,
Have you another purpose--
being, as you are, telling
of the brightness of the world?"

*We can't keep the wind still;
it makes the clouds rustle,
the starlings fly.
And we've not a moment's peace
since four, July.*

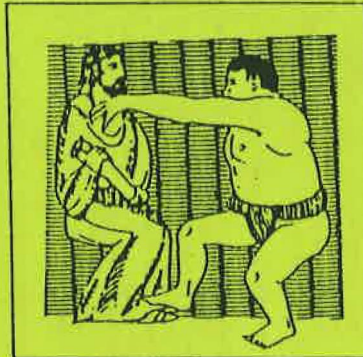
Chance, creature: All the frequencies
of the occurrence of the sun
make the trees and the shocking tongues of lovers
weep with sweet adieu.

*And we are here as ever, mon ami,
weaving and illuminate and blue.*



Henry stands in de bar & was odd

HENRY V.



At odds wif de world & its god



St. Stephen getting even



711

Wonders

of

the

World

by don

I. the mctells-clean b/w it's happening (again)

(international pop underground vol. xxxiv)
charging, strummy guitar & jangled chords in a nicely understated rythmning section. *clean* [a reference to the kiwi super-popsters?] is a truly wonderful little song of romantic revolt. just in time for spring! everytime I lift the tonearm [remember tonearms? (ed.)] I hear these words: *it's happening (again)*.

II. girl of the world-travel e.p.

(parasol)

ya know, you're living your life and happy. then you hear a song/a band and you can't imagine how you survived those grim days without 'em. these 4 Aussie three-piece pop songs made me live again.

III. the spinanes-rummy b/w hawaiian baby

(imp records)

If god and god's friend formed a pop duo from portland, oregon...

write 'em...

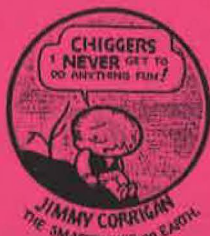
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II. parasol 201 north coler urbana il 61801

III. the spinanes po box 82480 portland or 97282

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